

WELFARE REFORM IS NOT UN-AMERICAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I have got to tell you I feel very honored to be a part of something today where we literally changed the way the Federal Government operates today in this House.

We have stopped or begun the process of stopping a process that for 30 years has encouraged destructive behavior, that has rewarded illegitimacy, that has paid people not to work, that has broken down families, that has torn apart communities, and has turned those inner cities that we hear so much about into war zones that are at times worse off than conditions in Third World countries.

Our welfare reform bill that supposedly is going to be so harmful to everybody just requires a few basic things; and, unfortunately, I have to disagree with the last speaker. There is nothing un-American or disloyal about the concepts contained in this bill.

What could be more American than the basic belief that if you are going to get paid, you have to work? Is that un-American? I do not think so. I think that is a basic concept that this country was created on.

It also trusts families and communities more than it trusts Federal bureaucrats and agencies. You know, it was 200 years ago that Thomas Jefferson said that the government that governs least governs best.

And James Madison, while drafting the Constitution, a very American document, mind you, stated we have staked the entire future of the American civilization not upon the power of government but upon the capacity of each of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves and to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God. That was James Madison, a man who drafted the Constitution, a man who was not un-American or disloyal.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, if you listen to the debate that has gone on this week, throwing out terms like disloyal and mean spirited has been part of a very shameful demagogic approach on this issue of welfare reform.

I have seen Members going around with ties with children on it. I just think that is grand. But that does not mean you like children. When you continue to allow a system to go forward that has hurt children for 30 years, you are not helping children.

And you can wear a tie, but I will tell you, of those people that were wearing ties with children on them, it is about the only thing they did during this welfare debate because they sure did not come up with an alternative to get rid of a system that rewards illegitimacy and unproductive behavior.

They brought nothing to the table. They were shameless in their approach, saying we were going to hurt children because we wanted to finally get rid of this corrupt system.

It reminds me of a movie I saw a few years ago. At the end of the movie a politician, who was basically trying to take over the world, was being shot at, and he held up a child as a body shield as he ran out. And the cameras clicked, and it showed up in the papers the next day that this politician was so shameful that he used a child as his shield.

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Well, ladies and gentlemen, we have seen where life has imitated art. Because this week liberal protectors of the status quo of the corrupt system that has destroyed our inner cities have held up little children because they want to protect their power. They want to protect the bureaucracies up and down these avenues. They want to protect their way of life, their corrupt way of life.

Let me tell you something. We have spent \$5 trillion over the past 30 years in this so-called war on poverty, and we have failed. It has ended up as a war on families, and war on hard work, a war on personal responsibility and a war on American values.

Look at the figures. It is uncontroverted. You can wear your ties all you want to. You can talk about how we are cutting school lunch programs. That is not the case. The fact of the matter is funding on school lunch programs for the next 4 years goes up.

Let us get used to the new math, folks. One plus one equals two. If you spend more money on school lunch programs in the year 2000 than you are spending now, that is an increase. Well, we are changing the way Washington works. Stay tuned.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of this, my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida [Mr. BILIRAKIS]?

There was no objection.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. BILIRAKIS] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as I have each March for the last dozen years here in the Hall of American democracy, to honor the spirit of freedom that lies at the heart of our political system. It is the idea of democratic government, brought forth by

the ancient Greeks and which today sweeps the modern world.

It is, indeed, fitting that we celebrate this magnificent concept of democratic government this week because this Saturday, March 25, is the date that people of Greek heritage and the Greek Orthodox faith—as well as freedom-loving individuals everywhere—celebrate the symbolic Rebirth of Democracy: Greek Independence Day.

March 25, 1995, will be the 174th anniversary of the beginning of Greece's struggle for independence from more than 400 years of foreign domination. It was on this historic day that the Greek people began a series of uprisings against their Turkish oppressors, uprisings that soon turned into a revolution attracting wide international support.

The Greeks' long and arduous struggle against the Ottoman Empire is a perfect example of the ability of mankind to overcome all obstacles if the will to persevere is strong enough and the goal—in this case, the dream of freedom—is bright enough.

The United States of America is surely the truest expression of this dream today. It remains an imperfect dream, yes, but it is still the shining example which oppressed people throughout the world have looked to for generations and from which they have gained strength in their struggles to overcome their oppressors.

This dream of democracy—born so long ago in Greece—and its greatest tangible expression in our great Democratic republic, Mr. Speaker, forms the common bond between our two nations. Furthermore, it is a bond that has stretched throughout history, from ancient times to the present day.

The history of the Greek war for independence also is filled with heroes and heroism, remarkable events by many peoples in a common cause. It is partly the story of the Klephts, who descended upon the invaders from their mountain strongholds. It is also the story of the Hydriots, seafarers who broke the Ottoman naval blockade; and it is the story of the Philhellenes, who took these tales of courage to Europe where their significance was not overlooked.

These stories woven together formed the fabric of a free and independent Greece, of democracy returned to the cradle where it was born, and defended by the defiant cries of the Greek patriots: "Eleftheria I Thanatos"—Liberty or Death.

As probably a typical illustration of courage in that fight is a story told in the newspaper "The Greek American" by writer Eva Catafygiotu Topping tells us of the fight by the Greeks of the island of Psara in the Aegean Sea.

I yield to the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY] for her statement.

Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you, Mr. BILIRAKIS.

Mr. Speaker, it is a distinct honor to join my friend, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and